

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MOSCOW 13806 011643Z

43

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8230

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 13806

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FOR GARRISON FROM MATLOCK

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OGEN

SUBJ: OFFICIAL-INFORMAL

1. ON EXHIBIT BROCHURE (STATE 216323, PARA 6) WE WOULD BE VERY MUCH OPPOSED TO INEVITABLY QUIXOTIC HIGH-LEVEL EFFORT HERE. AMBASSADOR SHOULD BE ABLE TO USE HIS FINAL CALLS FOR TOUR D'HORIZON OF MAJOR SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AND NOT IN FUTILE AND POSSIBLY COUNTERPRODUCTIVE EFFORT. SUCH AN APPROACH WOULD BE PARTICULARLY UNFORTUNATE IN VIEW OF THE SERIOUS DEFICIENCIES IN THE RUSSIAN TEXT IN QUESTION, WHICH WE HAVE SPELLED OUT IN THE REGULAR CHANNEL (MOSCOW 13794). DID ANYONE TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT THIS TEXT WHEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FIRST RAISED QUESTION?

2. RE HANDLING VOA MONITOR'S TRIP TO KIEV (USIA 26251), CAN YOU ESTIMATE WHETHER WE WILL HAVE ADVANCE PARTY ESTABLISHED THERE BY THAT TIME? IF SO, ROBIN WILL PROBABLY HAVE AN OFFICIAL VOLGA THERE WHICH COULD BE USED FOR SIDE TRIPS. IF NOT, WE WILL PRESUMABLY HAVE TO SEND CAR FROM HERE, AND IN LATTER EVENT, MONITOR MIGHT AS WELL RIDE IN IT AND TRY SOME MONITORING ALONG THE WAY. WE WOULD ALSO LIKE FURTHER DETAILS ON WHAT PRECISELY MONITOR INTENDS TO DO IN ALMA-ATA. WE CAN'T THINK OF ANY DISCREET WAY TO MONITOR OUTSIDE HOTEL AND WONDER WHETHER WE REALLY SHOULD RISK INCIDENT THERE JUST BEFORE EXHIBIT OPENING.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MOSCOW 13806 011643Z

3. WE CLEARED MOSCOW 13742 IN GREAT RUSH YESTERDAY( I WAS LITERALLY WALKING TO DOOR FOR OUTSIDE APPOINTMENT), AND IN RETROSPECT I WOULD HAVE PREFERRED MORE CAUTIOUS LANGUAGE. (E.G., "LOUIS STORY MIGHT POSSIBLY BE SIGNAL", ETC.) AT MOMENT WE HAVE NOTHING MORE TO GO ON ASIDE FROM RUMORS WHICH HAVE RECURRED INTERMITTENTLY OVER PAST FEW MONTHS THAT KOSYGIN WOULD RETIRE OR REPLACE PODGORNYY. THERE HAVE BEEN OCCASIONAL POSSIBLE ANOMALIES IN HIS PROTOCOLARY TREATMENT THIS YEAR, REPORTED AT TIME OF OCCURRENCE, WHICH DO NOT ADD UP TO MUCH,BUT IF HE LEAVES COULD BE IMPORTANT TO POST HAC ANALYSIS. HOWEVER, IF VICTOR FILED STORY THERE MUST HAVE BEEN REASON FOR IT, AND ONLY ONE WE CAN THINK OF IS ATTEMPT TO PREPARE PUBLIC (MAINLY FOREIGN, BUT INDIRECTLY PERHAPS SOVIET AS WELL) FOR A RETIREMENT OF SOME SORT, WHICH COULD THEN BE ATTRIBUTED MORE PLAUSIBLY TO HEALTH. WE ARE NOT YET PREDICTING THAT THIS IS WHAT IN FACT WILL HAPPEN, BUT LOUIS STORY IS MOST SUBSTANTIAL STRAW IN WIND THAT WE HAVE DETECTED IN RECENT MONTHS. AMBASSADOR HAS ASKED TO CALL ON KOSYGIN (AS WELL AS BREZHNEV AND PODGORNYY) BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE. IF WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE IF APPOINTMENT MATERIALIZES AND IF NOT WHAT EXCUSE WILL BE GIVEN. (THE EXPECTABLE ONE WOULD BE THAT HE HAS NOT YET RETURNED FROM VACATION).

4. REGARDING OUR PREDICITIONS LAST YEAR, YOU WILL RECALL THAT WE FOCUSSED THEM ON PRE- AND IMMEDIATE POST-CONGRESS PERIOD. GIVEN INEXORABLY ADVANCING AGE OF TOP GROUP, IT IS AXIOMATIC THAT EVERY DAY BRINGS SOME SORT OF CHANGE NEARER. WE STILL FEEL THAT PRESENT GROUP WILL HANG ON AS LONG AS IT CAN, BUT IF KOSYGIN'S HEALTH PROBLEMS ARE REAL, IT MAY BE MORE DIFFICULT TO RUN THE GOVERNMENT WITH HIM ON A SHORT SCHEDULE THAN IT WOULD BE TO ALLOW BREZHNEV THIS LUXURY. IN ANY EVENT, PROBLEMS WOULD PRESUMABLY MULTIPLY IF BOTH WERE PART-TIMERS. THERFORE, WITHOUT ATTEMPTING PREDICTIONS, IT WOULD BE WELL TO CONDITION OUR THINKING TO POSSIBILITY OF SOME CHANGES OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS. IF CHANGE DOES OCCUR, IT IN ITSELF WOULD PROVIDE THE BEST EVIDENCE OF IT IMPLICATIONS.IF A SUCCESSOR TO KOSYGIN SHOULD BE FROM MEMBERS OF THE GROUP IN THEIR FIFTIES, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03    MOSCOW 13806 011643Z

CHANGE COULD INVOLVE PREPARATION FOR THE POST-BREZHNEV TRANSITION. IF HIS SUCCESSOR, HOWEVER, IS IN HIS LATE SIXTIES OR OLDER, IT MIGHT IMPLY A HOLDING OPERATION WITH NO REAL DECISIONS MADE ON EVENTUAL SUCCESSION.

5. IN ANY EVENT, I AGREE WITH YOU THAT LOUIS' RETICENCE IN OWNING UP TO STORY IS STRANGE. MAYBE HIS ORDERS WERE

CHANGED AFTER ORIGINAL WENT OUT.

6. REGARDING SIMONS REPLACEMENT AND COUNSELOR TITLE, WE WOULD WISH TO CONSIDER LATTER ALTERNATIVE IF IT SEEMED NECESSARY PART OF PACKAGE T GET RIGHT PERSON FOR JOB. I DO NOT REALLY HAVE A GOOD FEEL FOR SHOSTAL: MARK IS IN BEST POSITION TO JUDGE, SINCE SHOSTAL WORKED FOR HIM HERE FOR A YEAR. IN ANY EVENT, WE ARE SENDING WORD TO BREMENT TO CALL YOU, AND ANTHING YOU WORK OUT WITH HIM WILL BE FINE WITH THE REST OF US. BREMENT WILL PRESUMABLY BE COMING IN FOR CONSULTATION IN A COUPLE OF WEEKS NOW THAT HIS CHINESE VISA HAS COME THROUGH. ONE POSSIBLE COMPLICATION IN REQUESTING COUNSELOR TITLE IS THAT IT WOULD RAISE QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT HEAD OF COMMERICAL OFFICE SHOULD NOT ALSO BE DESIGNATED COUNSELOR. IN PRINCIPLE, I SEE NO OBJECTION TO THIS, BUT WE MIGHT HAVE TO ASK FOR SEVERAL TITLES AT ONCE TO EVEN THINGS UP, AND EVERYTHING WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE MUCH NEATER IF IT WERE DONE ALONG WITH DESIGNATING POL AND E/C CHIEFS AS MINISTER-COUNSELORS.  
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